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MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

INFLUENCE OPERATIONS IN INSURGENCIES: IDENTIFYING FRAMING STRATEGIES FOR SPECIAL WARFARE

by

Clifford T. Howard

December 2014

Thesis Advisor: Camber Warren
Co-Advisor: Doowan Lee

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As the United States continues to extend its global reach while simultaneously reducing the size of its military force, unconventional methods must be employed in order to achieve U.S. national objectives. Further, as the global environment consists of increased conflict involving non-state actors and multinational insurgencies, a greater understanding of the motives, grievances, and methods employed to express those motives is required. The purpose of this research is to assess quantitatively whether there is a significant relationship between motivation of an insurgent group, and the effectiveness of the insurgency. To that end, this research utilizes existing databases and open-source information, limiting the parameters to conflicts between non-state actors versus state actors. This thesis begins by examining the existing literature in order to understand the rise of movements and violence, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa. The research further attempts to determine whether methods employed by an insurgent group or the introduction of an external actor, such as a foreign state or non-governmental organization, have an impact on the likelihood of success.

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INFLUENCE OPERATIONS IN INSURGENCIES: IDENTIFYING FRAMING STRATEGIES FOR SPECIAL WARFARE

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ABSTRACT

As the United States continues to extend its global reach while simultaneously reducing the size of its military force, unconventional methods must be employed in order to achieve U.S. national objectives. Further, as the global environment consists of increased conflict involving non-state actors and multinational insurgencies, a greater understanding of the motives, grievances, and methods employed to express those motives is required. The purpose of this research is to assess quantitatively whether there is a significant relationship between motivation of an insurgent group, and the effectiveness of the insurgency. To that end, this research utilizes existing databases and open-source information, limiting the parameters to conflicts between non-state actors versus state actors. This thesis begins by examining the existing literature in order to understand the rise of movements and violence, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa. The research further attempts to determine whether methods employed by an insurgent group or the introduction of an external actor, such as a foreign state or non-governmental organization, have an impact on the likelihood of success.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARIS	Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies
COIN	Counter-Insurgency
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organization
IIA	Inform and Influence Activities
IO	Information Operations
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MISO	Military Information Support Operations
MAR	Minorities at Risk
MAROB	Minorities at Risk Organizational Behavior
POQC	Psychological Operations Qualification Course
SNA	Social Network Analysis
SORO	Special Operations Research Office
SOF	Special Operations Forces
USSOCOM	U.S. Special Operations Command
USASOC	U.S. Army Special Operations Command

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. THE PROBLEM

As the United States continues to extend its global reach while simultaneously reducing the size of its military force, unconventional methods must be employed in order to achieve U.S. national objectives. Further, as the global environment consists of increased conflict involving non-state actors and multinational insurgencies, a greater understanding of the motives, grievances, and methods employed to express those motives is required.

Studies conducted by the Special Operations Research Office (SORO) of American University in the 1950s and 1960s and currently being continued by the Assessing Revolutionary and Insurgent Strategies (ARIS) series being conducted and published by the National Security Analysis Department at The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory offer valuable empirical insights to understanding insurgent movements.

While much research has been conducted on insurgent ideology and social movement theory, there is little published quantitative work that analyzes the potential relationship between motivations and successful insurgency. Similarly, there has been substantial research conducted on the rise of religious violence and the comparative relationship between violence and success, but little quantitative research to determine whether religious movements tend to be more successful than other types of movements. This research intends to fill the void between quantitative analysis and qualitative research in insurgent ideology.

B. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this research is to assess quantitatively whether there is a significant relationship between motivation of an insurgent group, and the effectiveness of the insurgency. To that end, this research utilizes existing databases and open-source information, limiting the parameters to conflicts between non-state actors versus a state actor. Research includes how to code motivation properly for each of the non-state actors, and the framing employed for their motivation to garner popular support. Any

recurring pattern found will provide useful insight that will inform how to update doctrine for Military Information Support Operations (MISO) in support of Special Warfare.

C. RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there a relationship between insurgent group motivations and their success in achieving political or nonpolitical goals?

D. THESIS SCOPE

This thesis begins by examining the existing literature in order to understand the rise of movements and violence, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa. Using a quantitative approach, the thesis then attempts to determine whether there is a relationship between motivation to commit acts of violence and political outcomes favorable to the insurgent group. The research further attempts to determine whether methods employed by an insurgent group or the introduction of an external actor, such as a foreign state or non-governmental organization, have an impact on the likelihood of success. The quantitative research is limited to conflicts involving non-state minority groups opposed to state actors in violent civil conflict.

E. OUTLINE

The second chapter of this thesis will examine previous research conducted in the areas of religious movements, civil conflict, and motivation. The second chapter will also briefly explore previous research conducted using the MAR dataset. The third chapter will describe the coding of dependent and independent variables and statistical methods used for this project. The fourth chapter will explain the findings and analysis of data. The final chapter of this thesis will provide recommendations for policy and future research.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

While this research is more concerned with outcomes of conflict than causality, this research is informed by several bodies of knowledge relevant to the relationship between insurgent motivation and outcome in civil war and religious violence. There appears to be some debate among authors about motivational factors, theological ideologies, and their effects on conflict. Even in using the MAR dataset, there is some disagreement regarding motivational factors and causality of conflict. That debate established the framework for this study.

A. CIVIL WAR

Kalyvas offers perhaps the most succinct yet comprehensive summations of civil war literature and the need for additional research to understand civil conflict:

> The overwhelming majority of research on civil war has overlooked the issue of violence. Most studies have focused, explicitly or implicitly (in the form of studies of revolution or ethnic conflict) on the causes of civil war (Skocpol 1979; Tilly 1978), civil war termination (Walter 1997; Licklider 1993), the political and social consequences of civil war (Rich and Stubbs 1997), the factors accounting for the success or failure of the belligerents (Race 1972; Leites and Wolf 1970), and the individual and group motivations underlying rebellion. One of the major (if not the major) aspect of civil war, violence against (and between) civilians, has been severely neglected. The centrality of violence in civil wars has been emphasized by observers and participants alike since Thucydides. Ten out of the thirteen deadliest conflicts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were civil wars. Yet civil war violence is not just a function of body count. One feature that sets interstate and civil wars apart is that in the latter civilians are the primary and deliberate target: at least eight out of ten people killed in contemporary civil wars have been civilians (Kriger 1992:1). What is more, violence in civil wars is frequently exercised between people who happen to know each other and have had a long record of peaceful interaction: neighbors, friends, even relatives.[1]

Kalyvas further notes that while there is a need for understanding civil wars, "a fundamental problem in the study of civil war violence is the dearth of systematic and comprehensive data. This is mainly due to the difficulty of gathering such data. Violence

[1] Stathis N Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: New York University, 2000), 1–2. http://www.yale.edu/macmillan/ocvprogram/licep/1/kalyvas/kalyvaspaper.pdf

is a key political resource in the conduct of civil wars. Competing sides have a vested interest in minimizing the atrocities they have committed (or are committing) and inflating those committed by their adversary."[2]

Kalyvas further provides the following simple model to assist in understanding civil wars: (1) civil wars are typically fought between insurgents and incumbents over some political power or sovereignty, (2) both sides must employ irregular tactics, and therefore differs greatly from conventional state-on-state conflict, (3) both sides depend heavily on civilian support, which can be problematic as violence increases.[3]

In addition to studies mentioned by Kalyvas, Fearon and Laitin contend that the rise in global insurgency and civil violence is a result of decolonization in the 1940s through 1970s which created in increased number of weak states which have been at risk for civil violence and insurgency since that time.[4] They argue that weakened state strength is a better predictor of insurgent movement and civil war than "indicators of ethnic and religious diversity, or measures of grievances such as economic inequality, lack of democracy or civil liberties, or state discrimination against minority religions or languages."[5] Fearon and Laitin further argue: "It appears *not* to be true that a greater degree of ethnic or religious diversity—or indeed any particular cultural demography—by itself makes a country more prone to civil war. This finding runs contrary to a common view among journalists, policy makers, and academics that holds ethnically divided states to be especially conflict-prone due to ethnic tensions and antagonisms."[6]

Collier and Hoeffler contend that while grievances may be a cause for rebellion, they are a poor indicator of civil war, and that external support and economic factors are a better indicator of potential conflict, claiming they find that "political and social variables that are most obviously related to grievances have little explanatory power. By

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[2] Ibid., 19.

[3] Ibid., 5–14.

[4] James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin,"Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 01 (February 2003): 75–90. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3118222.

[5] Ibid., 89.

[6] Ibid.

contrast, economic variables, which could proxy some grievances but are perhaps more obviously related to the viability of the rebellion, provide considerably more explanatory power,"[7]

In the debate between greed versus grievance, contemporary literature, including works of Fearon, Laitin, Collier, Hoeffler, and others seem to favor the argument that greed, rather that grievances, are a more accurate motivator and predictor of mobilization. With the perceived rise of religious violence, however, some scholars are beginning to rethink that notion.

Research conducted by RAND examined four cases (Al-Qa'ida, Taliban in Afghanistan, PKK in Turkey, and Maoists in Nepal) in creating a factor tree to determine that there are four top-tier factors necessary for public support to an insurgency: effectiveness of organization, motivation for supporting group or cause, perceived legitimacy of violence, and acceptability of costs and risks.[8] As the RAND findings indicate, there is significantly more than just a set of grievances that attract individuals to a movement and cause them to take action. Unfortunately, the RAND publication offers a limited set of four case studies and little empirical data to validate and further develop their findings. The authors further suggest research in "better defining the desired states of relevant factors" and "better estimating relative likelihoods of success in affecting those factors favorably" as well as "iterative work that simultaneously tests and enriches theory by drawing on concrete empirical data. Future work could benefit from a larger and more systematically defined set of cases examined with a common set of methods and types of data sources."[9]

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[7] Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563. doi:10.109/oep/gpf064.

[8] Paul K. Davis et al., *Understanding and Influencing Public Support for Insurgency and Terrorism* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2012), http://lbr.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG1122.html.

[9] Ibid., 172–173.

B. RELIGIOUS VIOLENCE

While religious movements and conflicts over theological ideologies are certainly not new phenomena, there is agreement in the literature that religiously motivated violence has been on the rise since the late 1980s and early 1990s, particularly in the Middle East and North Africa. Research conducted by Mohamed Hafez, Heather Gregg, Mark Juergensmeyer, and others attempt to explain this rise in religious violence. While they are careful to note that religious violence is certainly not limited to Islam, as Christianity and other religions provide motives for religious violence,[10] a large amount of contemporary literature is focused on violent movements involving Muslims.

Mohamed Hafez argues that in order to understand religious movements fully, it is important to focus on three critical areas: (1) individual motivations, (2) organizational strategies, and (3) societal conflicts.[11] In understanding individual motivation, Heather Gregg argues that while contemporary literature has led to conventional wisdom that religious violence is irrational and unrestrained, the problem is that "these assertions about religion's role in terrorism stem from two challenges in the literature. First, scholarship on religious terrorism tends to focus on one particular motivation—apocalyptic, millennial, or messianic terrorism, in which groups use violence to hasten the end of times and usher in an anticipated new world."[12] As Gregg points out, "religious terrorists, however, have other goals, some of which are earthly in their aims; these goals are often categorized as political, not religious."[13]

It is important to note, as Gregg does, that terrorism is a tactic that can be employed by either state or non-state actors to achieve political or non-political goals. With that in mind, Gregg further explains differences between traditional and religious terrorism, with traditional terrorism being divided into three sub-categories: leftist,

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[10] Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God: The Global Rise of Religious Violence*. 3rd ed. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003), 3–15.

[11] Mohammed M. Hafez. *Suicide Bombers in Iraq: The Strategy and Ideology of Martyrdom.* (Washington, DC: U.S. Institute of Peace Press, 2007), 221.

[12] Heather Gregg. "Defining and Distinguishing Secular and Religious Terrorism." *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8, no. 2 (2014): 36.

[13] Ibid.

rightist, and ethnic separatist.[14] Although religiously motivated terrorism may consist of elements of traditional terrorism, and other scholars try to fit religious violence within the models of traditional violence, Gregg argues that religious violence is unique in that it largely seeks to achieve one of three distinct goals that are separate from those of traditional terrorism: apocalypse, theocracy, and religious cleansing.[15] The distinction between them being that apocalyptic terrorists seek to create massive destruction to bring the end of the world, theocrats use violence as a means to create a religious government, and others use religious violence as a form of cleansing to eradicate "infidels."[16]

While individuals who are motivated by visions of the apocalypse and religious cleansing are worthy of research and study, it is difficult to measure their comparative success, short of quantifying amounts of damage or numbers of people killed. Those who seek theocratic governance, however, can have success measured in more conventional means of policy change and interaction with the state.

Continuing the idea of using religious movements to achieve earthly political goals, Hafez looks specifically at suicide bombers in Iraq, illustrating how existing political conditions in Iraq with the overthrow of Sadam's regime created a situation in which religious martyrs were able to be mobilized. He argues that although many of the religious fighters came from outside of Iraq, "the political and security situation in Iraq presented an opportunity for Islamic nationalists, ideological Baathists, and jihadi Salifis who stepped into the fray to promote their own political agendas."[17] Interestingly, he finds that, in the case of Iraq, it is the minority groups that are unable to compete politically that resort to suicide terrorism in order to create sectarian conflict and a failed state. In terms of achieving political success, Hafez finds that widespread unpopularity and a rigid ideological outlook "guarantees marginality in the political process" and "is not likely to win over a secular Iraq with a Shia majority."[18]

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[14] Ibid., 37.
[15] Ibid., 39.
[16] Ibid., 39–42.
[17] Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq*, 222.
[18] Ibid., 222–223.

While this brings into question whether engaging in religious violence can actually be successful in achieving success, Hafez also points out that there have been several religious successes, including: jihadist defeat of the Soviets in the 1990s, Hezbollah in Lebanon in the early 1980s and again in 2000, Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka, Hamas forcing Israelis to leave Palestinian lands.[19] Given these successes, Hafez further argues that the use of religious violence is likely going to continue to rise.[20]

Juergensmeyer argues that religious movements, specifically violent religious movements, are able to be successful because religion provides justification, motivation for mobilization, and social organization.[21] Hafez also finds that one reason that jihadists are able to successfully mobilize groups of people is that they "are aware of the symbolic universe that shapes the imagination of Arabs and Muslims. They know which chords to strike to incite ordinary people to righteous indignation."[22] He contends that religious movements are attractive because they rely on emotional appeals that call upon believers to engage in "an act of redemption, empowerment, and defiance against authorities" in order to "fulfill an obligation to God, sacrifice for the nation, and avenge a humiliated people," a powerful motivator which causes otherwise peaceful people to participate in violent activism.[23]

While there is a growing body of research on political and non-political goals of religious violence, anecdotal evidence of success and failure, and extensive qualitative research on the ideologies, methods, and organizational structures of religious movements, what has still not been adequately researched is if religious movements are likely to be more successful than other types of insurgencies, or if they truly are a great risk to U.S. national security. In fact, Juergensmeyer even argues:

> The common perception that there has been a rise in religious violence around the world in the last decades of the twentieth century has been borne out by those who keep records of such things. In 1989 the U.S. State

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19 Ibid., 236.

20 Ibid.

21 Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God,* 7.

22 Hafez, *Suicide Bombers in Iraq.* 224.

23 Ibid.

> Department roster of international terrorist groups listed scarcely a single religious organization. Almost twenty years later, at the end of the twentieth century, over half were religious…For this reason U.S. government officials frequently proclaim terrorism in the name of religion and ethnicity, as one of them put it, "the most important security challenge we face in the wake of the Cold War."[24]

C. PREVIOUS RESEARCH USING MAR

Initial research using Minorities at Risk (MAR) was conducted by Ted Gurr and James Scarritt who developed the project in the late 1980s and early 1990s in an attempt to further their own research in understanding ethnic and religious minorities in conflict, using the minority organization as the unit of analysis.[25] Since then, MAR has primarily been used by Gurr and others to identify trends in ethnic minorities and attempt to predict causes and geographical areas for potential future conflict.[26]

Building upon the earlier works of Gurr, Gregory Saxton adds that "in a direct manner, rebellion is influenced by three factors: mobilization, grievances, and contagion. Mobilization, in turn, is affected by the strength of the regional identity, the intensity of the repression, the size of the population and the extent of democratization, while grievances are shown to be fueled by a combination of repression and collective disadvantages."[27] This is in stark contrast to the greed theories presented by Fearon, Laitin, Collier, and Hoeffler presented earlier.

Regan and Norton apply MAR data to further assess the conditions that contribute to protest, rebellion, and civil war. Their findings appear to support the claim of Fearon and Laitin. that less important is the motivation for the minority group, but instead of finding that weakened states contributing to potential conflict, they find that "repression stands out as one mechanism that both appears to control low levels of disenchantment

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[24] Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the mind of God,* 6.

[25] Jóhanna Bimir, David Laitin, Amy Pate, and Stephen Saideman. "A-MAR (All-Minorities at Risk): Addressing the Selection Bias Issue" (University of Maryland, 2011). 4–7.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Gregory D. Saxton, "Repression, Grievances, Mobilization, and Rebellion: A New Test of Gurr's Model of Ethnopolitical Rebellion," *International Interactions* 31, no. 1 (2005): 106, doi: 10.1080/03050620590919452.

with state policies and yet fuels the mobilization of armed opposition to the state."[28] According to their findings, it is not motives or economic factors that indicate the potential for civil conflict, but rather the level of state repression.[29]

Suzan Olzak's research using MAR produced interesting findings that challenged the previously held notion that weaker states on the periphery of larger core states would be more likely to experience civil unrest, finding: "the magnitude of ethnic rebellion is not significantly greater in periphery countries, and the magnitude of nonviolent protest is not significantly lower in the periphery."[30] Olzak further found that except for a brief period form 1990–1994, NGO's did not have a significant impact on the level of nonviolent protest nor ethnic violence.[31]

While a great deal of meaningful quantitative research has been conducted using the MAR dataset, the commonality is that virtually all of the research conducted using MAR seeks to understand a causal nature of the start of civil conflict. The research in this thesis is unique in that rather than applying a predictive model to determine the onset of conflict, this research intends to explore the outcome of success. There is no published research to date that assesses the relationship between motivation and success.

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[28] Patrick M. Regan and Daniel Norton, "Greed, Grievance, and Mobilization in Civil Wars," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49, no. 3 (June, 2005): 333, doi: 10.1177/0022002704273441

[29] Ibid., 333–336.

[30] Susan Olzak. *The Global Dynamics of Racial and Ethnic Mobilization* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2006): 143.

[31] Ibid.

III. METHODS

A. DATA SOURCES, SPECIFICATION, AND REGRESSION

1. Data Sources

David Cunningham, Kristian Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan compiled the *Non-State Actors in Armed Conflict Dataset* (NSA). This dataset uses the Uppsala Conflict Data Project as a base to collect and code variables in order to conduct quantitative studies aimed at understanding duration, severity, and outcome of civil wars.[32] This is different from the often-used *Correlates of War* dataset in that instead of looking at large-scale conflict between state actors, it is focused on conflict between smaller, non-state actors. This dataset provides useful information for conducting studies on insurgent conflicts. The problem with this dataset is that provides almost no information about the motivation for the non-state group, nor does it account for the narrative framing utilized by the group in order to gain or maintain support for its social movement.

Filling the gap in the NSA dataset is the *Minorities at Risk* (MAR) dataset which collects information on any "ethno political group that: collectively suffers, or benefits from, systematic discriminatory treatment vis-à- vis other groups in a society; and/or collectively mobilizes in defense or promotion of its self-defined interests."[33] The MAR database collects data that is divided into four categories: group characteristics, group status, external support, and group conflict behavior. Group characteristics include variables such as ethnic group, population (including relative population and concentration), language, and religion. Group status measures duration, autonomy, and political repression / representation. External support is binomial data to determine if the

[32] David E. Cunningham, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Idean Salehyan. "Non-State Actors in Civil Wars: A New Dataset," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 30, no. 4 (November 2013): 516–531, doi:10.1177/0738894213499673.

[33] Minorities at Risk Project. 2009. "Minorities at Risk Dataset." College Park, MD: Center for International Development and Conflict Management. Retrieved 22 November 2014 from http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/ data.aspx.

group is sponsored by a state, non-state, or IGO. Group conflict behavior is focused on the number, types, and scale of violent attacks, protests, and rebellions.

While it may seem logical at first glance to merge the two datasets, this could not be accomplished within the scope and time parameters of this project. Therefore, this project will focus exclusively on the MAR dataset since it is best able to describe the independent variables and it is a more realistic expectation that the dependent variable of success can be derived.

A subset of the MAR dataset, the Minorities at Risk Organizational Behavior (MAROB) varies slightly from MAR in that its stated purpose "is to answer fundamental questions focusing on the identification of those factors that motivate some members of ethnic minorities to become radicalized, to form activist organizations, and to move from conventional means of politics and protest into violence and terrorism."[34] This study initially focused on ethno-political organizations in the Middle East and North Africa, and currently includes data on 118 unique organizations operating in 16 countries throughout the region between 1980 and 2004.[35]

All of the data used in this study was derived from the Minorities at Risk Organizational Behavior (MAROB) Version 9/2009 dataset, a project of the Center for International Development and Conflict Management as well as the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism. The value of using this dataset is that unlike several others that focus on international conflict, civil war, or insurgent uprisings, the MAROB provides more than just information about the composition, longevity, actions, and success of groups in conflict. This dataset additionally attempts to code information about the motivations, grievances, and ideologies of each organization. This allows for the assessment of correlations between the motivations and outcome of insurgencies. This dataset is also particularly interesting as it is focused on a region of the

[34] Victor Asal, Amy Pate and Jonathan Wilkenfeld, "Minorities at Risk Organizational Behavior Data and Codebook Version 9/2008," http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/data/asp. Accessed 22 November 14.

[35] Ibid.

world that is arguably experiencing the highest current levels of violence, insurgent activity, and foreign intervention.

2. Specification

While the primary independent variable is religious motivation, additional control variables were also included. Selecting which variables to include was informed primarily by the debate in the literature regarding organizational motivation, methods employed by insurgent groups, and external support.

In considering factors that can have an impact on insurgent outcomes, studies conducted by ARIS provide additional input. The ARIS study "Human Factors Considerations of Undergrounds in Insurgencies" outlines many of the organizational methods employed by insurgent groups that were considered in determining the specification used in this thesis. Specifically, this study names overt actions including military and paramilitary actions, negotiated settlements, international strategic communications, and shadow governance, and clandestine activities including propaganda, violence, terrorism, expansion of resistance networks, penetration in political organizations, political sabotage, and providing social services and administration.[36]

The MAROB dataset includes numerous measures for ideologies, methods, and external support. In deciding which variables are to be included in the model used, principles outlined by Christopher H. Achen were applied. Achen notes the importance of examining the data to ensure that variables are not duplicating each other, have extreme values or errors in values, and that the data actually captures what is intended.[37] Upon examining the data, it was noted that several of the variables for both ideology and organizational methods naturally oppose each other so that the presence of one logically

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[36] Paul J. Thompkins Jr., *Assessing Underground and Insurgent Strategies: Human Factors Considerations of Undergrounds in Insurgencies*, Second Edition (Fort Bragg, NC: United States Army Special Operations Command, 2013): 6, http://www.soc.mil/ARIS/ARIS.html

[37] Christopher H. Achen, *Interpreting and Using Regression* (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, 1982), 51–56.

and practically meant the exclusion of the other. For example, if an organization has a leftist ideology or employs coercive sanctions as a methodology, it cannot also maintain a rightist ideology or employ non-coercive methods. Additionally, two of the ideology variables (supremacist and environmental) provided a mean and max of zero, indicating that those two motives were determined to not be present in any of the observations, and subsequently those variables were disregarded.

3. Regression

As dichotomous dependent variables are used in this thesis, logistic regression analysis is employed to determine whether a statistically significant positive or negative relationship exists between the motivational ideology, and the outcome of an insurgent conflict. As Aldrich and Nelson point out, "the point of probit and logit analysis is to measure the relationship between the exogenous variables, X, and the dependent variable, Y. Reported coefficient estimates are the asymptotically unbiased and efficient point estimates to be used for this purpose."[38]

To that end, regression analysis will include comparing coefficients as well as examining for statistical significance to determine if there is a meaningful relationship between the dependent variables of organizational outcomes and the independent variables of organizational ideology, organizational strategy, and external support.

B. DEFINING DEPENDENT VARIABLE

1. Conceptual Definition

Conflict outcome is conceptually defined as the minority group achieving a measurable gain in relationship to the state. These gains are further divided into three distinct categories: state repression, state violence, and state agreement. State repression is defined as how the state treats the organization in terms of whether the organization is considered legal or illegal, as well as if the organization is tolerated or targeted by the

[38] John Herbert Aldrich and Forrest D. Nelson, *Linear Probability, Logit, and Probit Models* (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE, 1984), 54.

state for repressive actions. State violence is a measure of whether the state uses lethal action against the organization and if that action is periodic or consistent. Consideration was given to whether these two terms were conceptually different, and the key distinction between the two resides in not just whether the minority group is legal and / or tolerated (a measure of repression) but whether violent action was also taken against the minority group by the state. In examining the data, there are enough instances of groups that are repressed legally but not violently to consider the two separately.

State agreement (defined as organization success in MAROB) measures concessions made by the state, including meeting for negotiations. This differs greatly from state repression and state violence in that it is an indicator that the state is not simply accepting or tolerating a minority group, but actually making political concessions, either through negotiations or outright concession to the minority groups' stated objectives.

This is closely related to work done in a thesis *The Leaderless Social Movement Organization: Unstoppable Power Or Last- Ditch Effort*, in which Justin Hsu and Brian Low conceptualize success along a spectrum of seven indicators:

> (1) Has the organization taken action against the target? (2) Has the target acknowledged the social movement organization as valid and relevant? Has the target verbally indicated that the social movement organization is legitimate and is worthy of a response? (3) Has the target consulted with the social movement organization? Has the target invited the social movement organization to negotiate a solution to remedy grievances? (4) Has the target made a concessional claim or promise to act in accordance with the social movement organization demands? (5) Has the target changed its behavior in the direction desired by the organization? (6) Has the target complied exactly with the demands of the organization? (7) Has the social movement organization achieved its desired outcome or realized its overall goal?[39]

[39] Justin S Hsu and Brian C Low. "The Leaderless Social Movement Organization: Unstoppable Power Or Last- Ditch Effort?" (master's thesis. Naval Postgraduate School, 2010).

2. Measurement and Indicators

The MAROB data coded each of the three subcategories of conflict outcome on scales ranging from three to five points. In order to more accurately determine success, the data was sorted by organization and time, then calculated if there was a change in each of these categories over time. This was recorded dichotomously as a new set of data, and the binomial value of success (not the original MAROB value) was used as the dependent variable of success.

Since the data shows changes in political conditions over time, decreases in the level of repression and violence over time are coded as a positive outcome (a value of 1). Similarly, increases or no change in repression or violence are considered negative outcomes (a value of 0). Conversely, increases in state agreement are coded as a positive outcome (a value of 1), while decreases or no change are considered negative outcomes (a value of 0).

Consideration was given to using the original values versus binomial data in order to account for degrees of change in outcome rather than if any change had been achieved. Upon careful examination of the data, it was noted that there were only a small number of observations in which the organization had achieved more than one level of change over any given period of time, and that this only occurred in the category of state repression. Further, the values collected in MAROB are not linearly scaled. For example, a change between a value of 3 and 2 is not equal to a change in value between 4 and 3. Therefore, using this data to determine degrees of effectiveness did not appear to produce meaningful results, whereas simplifying the data binomially provided a better indicator of conflict outcome.

C. DEFINING INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

1. Conceptual Definitions

Based upon previous literature, the primary independent variable is the organizational ideology of religion. Additional organizational ideologies as well as

organizational strategies and external support were also considered based upon the debates in the literature presented.

Four distinct ideologies were used: religious, leftist, ethnic, and democratic. Leftist ideology is considered to be a belief in redistribution of wealth, as opposed to the rightist ideology of free markets. Ethnic ideologies are those that seek inclusive representation, not necessarily autonomy or succession from the state. Clearly democratic ideologies are those in support of a democracy, as opposed to authoritarian forms of government. Certainly, the opposing ideologies (i.e.: rightist instead of leftist, or authoritarian instead of democratic) could have been used, but this was found to not significantly impact the findings.

The organizational strategies used are: propaganda, coercion, terrorism, insurgency, and provision of social services. Propaganda is defined as distribution of radio or print products on a daily or weekly basis. Insurgency is guerilla activity directed at the state. This is distinct from terrorism, which are violent acts directed towards civilians. Coercion involves forcibly obtaining financial, material, or personnel support from the civilian population. Social services refers to provision of education, health care, and poverty alleviation to the civilian population, either in competition with or in absence of those services being provided by the state.

External support considers whether or not financial, humanitarian, political, or military assistance has been provided by a foreign state, IGO, or NGO.

2. Measurement and Indicators

a. Organizational Ideology

The measurement for organizational ideology is already coded binomially in MAROB, whereby a value of 1 was assigned to an organization that demonstrated that guiding ideology and a value of 0 assigned to any organization that did not hold that ideology. A null value was assigned to any organization that a particular ideology not able to be observed. Observations with null values were removed in each of the regression models.

While it is possible to have more than one ideology present, the presence of certain ideologies logically and practically meant the absence of an opposite ideology. Therefore, opposite ideologies were considered separately from each other.

b. Organizational Strategy

MAROB considered twelve separate organizational strategies and coded a three-point scale whereby a value of zero indicated that the strategy was not used, a value of one indicated that the strategy was a minor one, and a value of 2 indicated that the strategy was a major or frequent one. For this study, this was reduced to a binomial approach combining the minor and major strategies, so that the presence of the strategy was coded with the value 1, and the absence of the strategy coded with a value of 0. As with the dependent variable, the values were not scaled, and it is rather subjective in most cases whether the strategy was a major or minor one. Therefore, using the binomial approach provided more useful results.

As with organizational ideologies, the presence of certain strategies logically and practically meant the absence of an opposite strategy. Therefore, opposite strategies were also considered separately from each other.

c. External Support

Each of these was coded in MAROB binomially with a value of 1 for the presence of support and a value of 0 for no presence of that type of support. No additional consideration or modification was required.

D. HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis is that based upon the overwhelming amount of literature devoted to the rise of religious violence, and a focus on religious movements in contemporary studies of social movement theory, that religiously motivated movements will be more likely to result in positive outcomes. While this certainly will not equate to causality, identifying conditions under which certain motivations for insurgent conflict are more likely to be successful can provide critical lessons.

While this research would be limited in scope in that it would only be able to address those conflicts which involving racial, ethnic, tribal, or religious minorities, this research will at least provided a basis for further research into the relationship between motivation and the success of insurgencies.

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IV. ANALYSIS

A. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The data used in this study included 1,789 unique observations of 92 distinct organizations from 1980 through 2004. Table 1 illustrates each of the variables used in more detail. The first column provides the name of the variable. Column two contains the numbers of observations after the null values were removed. The remaining columns provide the mean, standard deviation, min value (which should be expected to be zero) and max value (which should be expected to be one). The variables are also grouped by type with the first group being the dependent variables, the second being organizational ideologies, followed by organizational methods and external support.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Org ID	1,789				
Year	1,789	1993		1980	2004
OUTCOME					
Repression	1,632	0.101	0.302	0	1
Violence	1,627	0.047	0.211	0	1
Agreement	1,672	0.052	0.222	0	1
IDEOLOGY					
Religious	1,789	0.234	0.423	0	1
Leftist	1,764	0.315	0.464	0	1
Ethnic	1,764	0.598	0.491	0	1
Democratic	1,708	0.537	0.499	0	1
Propaganda	1,736	0.740	0.439	0	1
STRATEGY					
Coercion	1,771	0.029	0.167	0	1
Terrorism	1,780	0.133	0.340	0	1
Insurgency	1,773	0.103	0.304	0	1
Social Services	1,707	0.195	0.396	0	1
EXT SUPPORT					
Foreign	1,572	0.373	0.484	0	1
IGO	1,788	0.120	0.325	0	1
NGO	1,772	0.069	0.253	0	1

B. REGRESSION ANALYSIS

In comparing the exogenous variables, as illustrated in Table 2, there is a statistically significant positive relationship between religious ideology and conflict outcomes of reducing both levels of repression and violence. This indicates that during the course of conflict, violence and repression from the state should be expected to lessen if religion is used as the organizational ideology. These findings also suggest that while religion may be effective at reducing violence and repression, it is not sufficient on its own to produce actual policy changes.

There is also a significant positive relationship between democratic ideologies and all three measures of outcome. Ethnicity also holds a statistically significant relationship to conflict outcome, both in terms of violence and state agreement, although it is a negative one. In other words, ethnically motivated movements are likely to see an increase in violence, and less likely to see favorable agreements from the state

Of the ideologies considered, the only one that was not statistically significant in any model was the leftist ideology. While this is related to conflict outcome, and not conflict causality, the findings on the relationship between organizational ideology and conflict outcomes seem to bring into question the earlier claim by Collier and Hoeffler that "political and social variables that are most obviously related to grievances have little explanatory power."[40] This finding also seems to run contrary to the beliefs of Fearon and Laitin regarding the role of religious and ethnic diversity in civil conflict.[41] Granted, they were primarily alluding to the onset of civil conflict, but according to the findings in this data, it is apparent that organizational ideologies do matter in terms of conflict resolution.

Comparatively, measures of organizational strategy appear to provide little to explain conflict outcomes. There is almost no statistical significance between the organizational strategies employed and outcomes. Of particular interest is the observation

[40] Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," 563.

[41] James D. Fearon, and David D. Laitin. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," 75–90.

that propaganda was not significant, especially given the amount of attention given by states, as well as external actors, in understanding propaganda and counter-narratives during conflict. This is not to suggest that propaganda and narratives (or other organizational strategies) do not matter in terms of conflict resolution, but in these models they did not factor is a significant way.

Also of interest is the role of external support. While Ozark noted earlier that NGO support did not impact levels of violence in conflict,[42] which this analysis also supports, it is also worth noting that NGO support does positively impact conflict resolution in terms of state agreement. In terms of violence and repression, however, IGO support has a significant negative impact. Further, foreign support appears to yield no significant impact on conflict resolution one way or the other.

[42] Olzak, Susan. *The global dynamics of racial and ethnic mobilization.* 143.

Table 2. Logistic Regression Analysis.

	Dependent variable:		
	Repression	Violence	Agreement
	(1)	(2)	(3)
IDEOLOGY			
Religious	0.437*	0.989***	-0.241
	(0.252)	(0.383)	(0.402)
Leftist	0.183	0.604	0.180
	(0.244)	(0.379)	(0.332)
Democratic	0.523**	0.658**	1.087***
	(0.216)	(0.322)	(0.348)
Ethnic	-0.155	-0.710**	-0.506*
	(0.206)	(0.304)	(0.293)
STRATEGY			
Propaganda	0.353	0.338	-0.131
	(0.254)	(0.395)	(0.333)
Insurgency	0.199	0.812**	0.042
	(0.324)	(0.363)	(0.374)
Terrorism	-0.471	0.032	0.206
	(0.316)	(0.371)	(0.360)
Coercion	0.495	0.293	0.893
	(0.527)	(0.604)	(0.580)
Social Services	-0.336	-0.333	0.644**
	(0.248)	(0.327)	(0.289)
EXT SUPPORT			
Foreign	0.149	0.223	0.377
	(0.224)	(0.309)	(0.302)
IGO	-0.979***	-0.823*	-0.175
	(0.364)	(0.480)	(0.340)
NGO	-0.014	0.525	0.785**
	(0.367)	(0.397)	(0.358)
Constant	-2.654***	-3.893***	-3.743***
	(0.319)	(0.483)	(0.476)
Observations	1,226	1,233	1,243
Log Likelihood	-402.434	-231.330	-251.663
Akaike Inf. Crit.	830.869	488.660	529.325

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

V. CONCLUSION

A. POLICY AND DOCTRINE IMPLICATIONS

Based on the findings in this study, it is apparent that a greater focus needs to be placed on understanding insurgent grievances, motivations, and ideologies. That is not to say that there is little or no importance in understanding methods used by insurgent groups, but rather to challenge the notion in the literature that ideology is not an indicator of conflict or success. These findings support the works of Hafez, Gregg, Juergensmeyer, and others who indicate that understanding ideology, especially religious and ethnic ideology, is important to understanding conflict and conflict resolution.

1. International Relations Policy

While there has been some debate about the role of religion in U.S. foreign policy, these findings suggest that consideration of the role and use of religion may be warranted.

Fox argues that religion not only has the power to legitimize governments and action by the government such as war, the absence of religion in policy is increasingly being viewed as falling short on promises of equality, freedom, economic prosperity, and social justice.[43]

Robert Reilly adds that not only is religion important to the legitimacy of both the state and a movement, it is equally important to question the theology that is being used as the foundation of such claim to legitimacy. In discussing the current conflicts in the Middle East that claim Islam as justification, he argues that the U.S. needs to not shy away from entering a theological debate about the true meanings of Islam, stating:

> Although Muslims who practice Islam as a faith rather than an ideology may not be naturally attuned to democracy, they are certainly not congenitally disposed to totalitarian tyranny, and will fight to escape its

43 Jonathan Fox and Shmuel Sandler. *Bringing Religion into International Relations* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 38.

> embrace if given the chance. They are natural allies if we can assure them that we make the distinction between Islam and Islamism, and they themselves make it as well. Here is where the damage from our public diplomacy comes in. In the West, we seem clueless that much of the Muslim world sees our presentation of freedom as morally empty.[44]

Further, based on the findings in this study, additional consideration needs to be given to the partnership between U.S. Government and NGOs, as NGOs are likely to have a greater contribution to success than foreign military or IGOs. This is certainly not a new or novel concept, as Clifford Bob describes in detail how insurgents market themselves to international NGOs in order to gain support.[45] What these finding indicate is that this support frequently translates to success. Therefore, marketing U.S. interests to and partnering with these NGOs is essential to not only achieving U.S. national objectives, but also limiting options for adversaries.

2. Special Warfare Training and Doctrine

LTG Charles Cleveland, Commanding General, U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), writes:

> Since the inception of the United States Army Special Forces, understanding indigenous individuals and the human domain in which they exist has been a persistent Army Special Operations Forces cornerstone. Relationships with indigenous individuals enable Special Warfare. Understanding why individuals choose to join an underground movement, why law-abiding citizens are tempted to lead a dangerous underground life, why individuals stay in underground organizations, and what behaviors individuals use to survive are key questions that will reveal insights into the individuals that may be our partners. Special Warfare's leverage of and reliance on indigenous forces offers a unique capability. This Special Warfare capability offers our nation's leaders necessary and different strategic options. Our Special Warfare mission

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[44] Robert R. Reilly "No Substitute for Substance." *The Journal of International Security Affairs* 17 (2009): 16.

[45] Clifford Bob, *The marketing of rebellion: Insurgents, media, and international activism*. Cambridge University Press (2005): 4–6.

> necessitates our continued educational and intellectual commitment to studying human factors.[46]

In essence, LTG Cleveland emphasizes the criticality of understanding how to motivate and recruit indigenous personnel for Special Warfare through psychological and cognitive means.

The Military Information Support Operations Command (MISOC) mission "is to provide fully capable Military Information Support (MIS) forces to Combatant Commanders, U.S. Ambassadors, and other agencies to synchronize plans and execute inform and influence activities (IIA) across the range of military operations."[47] Further, the MISOC aims to employ strategies that "are not forms of force, but are force multipliers that use nonviolent means in often violent environments. Persuading rather than compelling physically, they rely on logic, fear, desire or other mental factors to promote specific emotions, attitudes or behaviors. The ultimate objective of U.S. military information support operations is to convince enemy, neutral, and friendly nations and forces to take action favorable to the United States and its allies."[48] In order to accomplish this objective, it is important to first understand the motives for the attitudes and behaviors that are likely to create successful insurgency.

In order to accomplish the objectives outlined by the MISOC, a greater understanding of religious tenants and how they are operationalized into movements is necessary. The current Psychological Operations Qualification Course (POQC) focuses on current doctrine, target audience analysis, measures of effectiveness, regional studies, and communication strategies and tools. While these are certainly valuable blocks of instruction, the POQC does not offer any training on religious narratives. Arguably, this is largely due to the fact that religious themes are currently forbidden under current U.S. policy. Regardless of updating policy, understanding individuals and movements, as

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[46] Paul J. Thompkins Jr., *Assessing Underground and Insurgent Strategies, v.*

[47] United States Army Special Operations Command, "Military Information Operations Command Fact Sheet," Retrieved 20 March 2014 from http://www.soc.mil/4th%20MISG/ 4thMISG.html.

[48] Ibid.

described by LTG Cleveland, requires an in depth knowledge of the ideologies of those people.

Additionally, while USASOC does a relatively good job of partnering with foreign nations and other governmental organizations, there is little partnership with NGOs. According to the results presented here, building long-term, steady-state relationships with these organizations may be just as important as fostering relationships with foreign nations is establishing and expanding a global SOF network.

B. LIMITATIONS

The primary limitation to this research is that it is fairly narrow in scope. While the MAROB dataset currently offers the best database for examining organizational motivations, it is limited both in time and geography. It addresses cases from 1980 through 2004 and only in the Middle East and North Africa. While these findings shed light on much of the current U.S. conflicts, the results may not necessarily be true in other areas, such as South America or Europe, which are also experiencing insurgent conflict.

Second, the data used does not differentiate between Islam, Christianity, and other religions (let alone separate denominations of each). While it can be inferred with certainty that the vast majority of the cases used in this study were Islamic, that can also create a bias in the data.

C. FUTURE RESEARCH

There are two primary directions that this research should be advanced: expanding the data to include more observations and other data sets, and examining relationships amongst various denominations of religion.

There are several other datasets that are used to analyze various levels of conflict and success. Notably, the Non-State Actors in Armed Conflict Dataset, and Correlates of War both have useful variables, but lack the ability to assess the effect of motivation. Additional coding of motivational factors in these and other commonly used conflict databases would allow for greater empirical research. Even within MAR, the only dataset

that fully captures a range of motivational factors is MAROB, which is currently limited in scope in terms of time period and geographically limited to the Middle East and North Africa. As the data is currently being phased for future expansion, it would be worthwhile to continue this type of research to see if the findings remain true across time and location.

MAROB also does not currently allow for distinguishing between different religious denominations. This could prove increasingly important as data is built to include conflicts beyond geographical regions and time periods. While these findings indicate that there is a relationship between religion and success, there is no claim as to whether certain religions are more likely to be successful across a spectrum of definitions of success.

Additional coding of existing databases, including motivational factors as well as sub-dividing religion into specific denominations, could prove valuable in providing the ability to conduct greater empirical research to inform policy and doctrine.

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